



**Barry Lawrence Ruderman
Antique Maps Inc.**

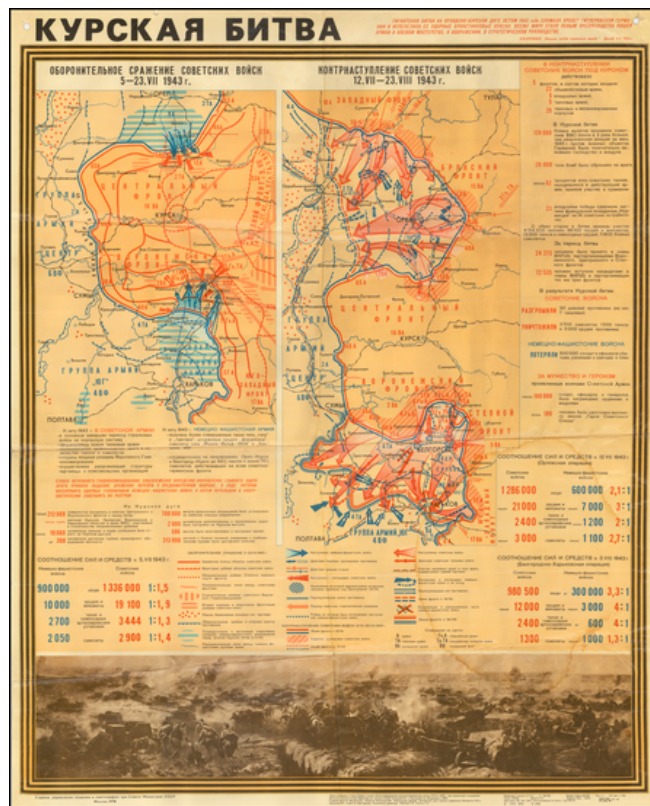
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Курская битва (Battle of Kursk) [Russian Educational Wall Map -- 1943]

Stock#: 46011
Map Maker: СССР Ministers Dept of
Topography & Cartography
Date: 1978
Place: Moscow
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size: 42 x 34.5 inches
Price: \$ 450.00



Description:

Fascinating Russian Educational Wall Map, illustrating and describing the Battle of Kursk in the Summer of 1943, with a vignette from the Battle.

This map was likely used for teaching purposes, to Russian High School aged students, in the 1970s.

The map on the left shows the initial attack by the Germans between July 5 and July 23, 1943. The title reads "Defensive Posture of the Soviet Forces."

The map on the right shows counteroffensive of the Russians between July 12 and August 23, 1943. The title translation reads "Counter Attack by the Soviet Forces."

The name of the printing house is Department of Topography and Cartography of the Union Soviet Ministers of the USSR.



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At the top right, the message from a speech given by Leonid Brezhnev, "Grand Victory of the Soviet People" given on May 1965, in red translates as:

Major Battle in Orolovsko Kursk during the summer of 1943, which broke the back of Hitler's Germany and decimated the German heavy tank army. The whole world learned clearly the superiority of our army and the mastery of the battle in the armament and management of the strategy.

The Battle of Kursk

The Battle of Kursk was a Second World War engagement between German and Soviet forces on the Eastern Front near Kursk in the Soviet Union during July and August 1943.

The German offensive was code-named Operation Citadel and led to one of the largest armored clashes in history, the Battle of Prokhorovka. The German offensive was countered by two Soviet counter-offensives, Operation Polkovodets Rumyantsev and Operation Kutuzov. For the Germans, the battle was the final strategic offensive that they were able to launch on the Eastern Front. Their extensive loss of men and tanks ensured that the victorious Soviet Red Army enjoyed the strategic initiative for the remainder of the war.

The Germans hoped to weaken the Soviet offensive potential for the summer of 1943 by cutting off a large number of forces that they anticipated would be in the Kursk salient. The Kursk salient or bulge was 160 miles long from north to south and 99 miles from east to west. By eliminating the Kursk salient, the Germans would also shorten their lines, nullify Soviet numerical superiority in critical sectors and regain the initiative from the Soviet Union.

Adolf Hitler believed that a victory here would reassert German strength and improve his prestige with his allies, who were considering withdrawing from the war. It was also hoped that large numbers of Soviet prisoners would be captured to be used as slave labor in the German armaments industry.

The Soviet government had advance intelligence of the German intentions, provided in part by the British intelligence service and Tunny intercepts. Aware months in advance, the Soviets built a defense in depth designed to wear down the Germans. The Germans delayed the offensive while they tried to build up their forces and waited for new weapons, mainly the new Panther tank and larger numbers of the Tiger heavy tank. This gave the Soviet Army time to construct a series of deep defensive belts. The defensive preparations included minefields, fortifications, artillery fire zones and anti-tank strong points. Soviet mobile formations were moved out of the salient and a large reserve force was formed for strategic counter-offensives.



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The Battle of Kursk was the first time in the Second World War that a German strategic offensive was halted before it could break through enemy defenses and penetrate to its strategic depths. Though the Soviet Army had succeeded in winter offensives previously, their counter-offensives following the German attack at Kursk were their first successful strategic summer offensives of the war.

Detailed Condition:

Minor dampstaining. Evidence of old folds.